



ST. PAUL HIGHLIGHTS

December 2020

VOLUME 69 ISSUE 12

A thousand times in history
a baby has become a king,
but only once in history
did a King become a baby.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

5, 7 & 9PM-INSIDE OR PARKING LOT

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE - 11AM-INSIDE OR PARKING LOT

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THIS MONTH
DEC 6TH-GIFTS FOR LMM RE-ENTRY &
BEREA COMMUNITY OUTREACH DUE
DECEMBER 24TH-CHRISTMAS EVE-OFFICE CLOSES AT NOON
DECEMBER 25TH-CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 30TH-COMMUNITY MEAL-TAKEOUT 5-6PM

DATE	TIME	ASSISTING MINISTER	MUSIC LEADERS	AUDIO/VIDEO	ALTAR GUILD	USHERS/ GREETERS
12/6	9:00	Tafy Pavlick	Covenant Choir	Nate French Dave Kushman Phillip Sultan	Marilyn Niksa	Team 1&2
	11:00	Meg Montag	Covenant Singers	Jeff Campbell Nate French Phillip Sultan		Team 1&2
12/13	9:00	Sherrill Crawford	Praise Team	Nate French Dave Kushman Phillip Sultan		Team 3&4
	11:00	Liz Wittmann	Covenant Singers	Jeff Campbell Nate French Phillip Sultan		Team 3&4
12/20	9:00	Cindy Cain	Covenant Choir	Nate French Dave Kushman Phillip Sultan		Team 5&6
	11:00	Jon Montag	Covenant Singers	Jeff Campbell Nate French Phillip Sultan		Team 5&6
12/24	5:00	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD
	7:00	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD
	9:00	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD
12/25	11:00	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD
12/27	9:00	Mike King	Praise Team	Nate French Dave Kushman Phillip Sultan		Team 7&8
	11:00	Dean Firing	Covenant Singers	Jeff Campbell Nate French Phillip Sultan		Team 7&8



If you have a special event for January that you would like acknowledged in this space, please notify the office by December 15th.



A Rough Christmas

It's going to be a rough Christmas.

A novel virus necessitating social distancing, masks, smaller gatherings, and a ban on congregational singing all but guarantee that most of our Christmas traditions both as a church, and as individual families, will likely be put on hold this year. We are such creatures of habit, that when the ordinary flow of our lives is interrupted like it has been this past year, it affects us quite a bit. And when truly cherished annual events are significantly modified or, God forbid, canceled, we feel it as a true loss.

So, it's going to be a rough Christmas. Know that going in. Prepare for it. Grieve it. I know I am.

When you think about it, the first Christmas was pretty rough, too. According to the story in St. Luke's Gospel, a "world wide" tax uprooted the holy family and put them on the road while St. Mary was in the ninth month of her pregnancy. When it came time for her to give birth, there wasn't room for them in the inner part of the house where they were staying, so she gave birth to her firstborn son in the place where the housholders kept their animals, and she laid the newborn infant Jesus in a feeding trough. Higher taxes, a road trip while pregnant and likely on the back of a donkey, 1st century "medical care," with labor and delivery taking place in an animal house. I'd say that was a rough Christmas. So, for what it's worth, we're in good company.

And who knows, maybe roughing it, like the holy family, can help us appreciate Christmas all the more.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Skillman

FINANCIALS

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
Year-to-Date Financial Summary as of:

October 31, 2020

Income and Expenses Summary	Current Year Actual YTD	Current Year Budget YTD	Over/(Under) Budget	Previous Year Actual YTD
Income				
Congregational Contributions	\$ 296,009.34	\$ 336,670.00	\$ (40,660.66)	\$ 320,603.43
Building Use	2,445.00	6,500.00	(4,055.00)	6,229.00
Interest	11.83	150.00	(138.17)	131.61
Other Income	1,133.99	4,670.00	(3,536.01)	3,887.67
Total Income	\$ 299,600.16	\$ 347,990.00	\$ (48,389.84)	\$ 330,851.71
	Current Year Actual YTD	Current Year Budget YTD	(Over)/(Under) Budget	Previous Year Actual YTD
Expenses				
Benevolence	5,920.19	6,730.00	809.81	32,060.30
Worship	9,074.50	14,524.00	5,449.50	8,786.64
Programs & Services	1,809.61	12,517.00	10,707.39	9,308.98
Property	76,168.68	86,560.00	10,391.32	48,470.09
Staff Salaries and Benefits	160,912.55	181,066.00	20,153.45	173,789.53
Contracted Services	19,565.00	26,670.00	7,105.00	24,920.00
Administration & Support	12,712.12	20,449.00	7,736.88	16,771.38
Total Expenses	286,162.65	348,516.00	62,353.35	314,106.92
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 13,437.51	\$ (526.00)	\$ 13,963.51	\$ 16,744.79

Income and Expenses Summary Notes:

Overall Comments and Income Review

The YTD period ending October 31, 2020, has an operating surplus of \$13,438, about \$3,000 less than at October 31, 2019. Congregational Contributions through October 2020 are almost \$25,000 less than contributions received through October 2019, a reduction of 7.7%. Total Income at October 31, 2020, is now \$31,000 less than at October 31, 2019. Congregational Contributions are under budget by just over \$40,000 and Total Income is under budget by a little more than \$48,000 as of October 31, 2020. October continued the downward trend in income.

Note: Other Income includes periodic gifts made by the Thrivent Choice Donation program, clothing and paper recycling programs, and other miscellaneous unrestricted income. For the foreseeable future, we will not be receiving paper or clothing recycling income.

Expenses Review

Total expenses are under budget by about \$62,000 as of October 31, 2020. Total expenses YTD are nearly \$28,000 less than total expenses as of October 2019. We are now about 18% under budget. We paid the roof repairs in October, and we had 3 payrolls.

Note: Benevolence payments are a percentage of contributions. Therefore, when contributions are higher, benevolence payments are higher. In 2020, we budgeted 2% for the Synod only.

Balance Sheet Summary	As of October 31, 2020	As of October 31, 2019	Variance
Assets			
Current Assets (Cash)	\$ 192,196.89	\$ 120,744.61	\$ 71,452.28
Fixed Assets (Building)	3,041,549.00	3,041,549.00	0.00
Invested Assets (Endowment)	656,914.33	642,507.76	14,406.57
Total Assets	\$ 3,890,660.22	\$ 3,804,801.37	\$ 85,858.85
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	\$ 7,935.48	\$ 7,998.73	\$ (63.25)
Loan from Endowment Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payroll Protection Program Temp Loan	40,419.00	0.00	40,419.00
Payroll Withholding	0.00	308.91	(308.91)
Accrued Expenses and Other	250.00	250.00	0.00
Dedicated Fund Balances	147,377.66	140,351.26	7,026.40
Total Liabilities	\$ 195,982.14	\$ 148,908.90	\$ 47,073.24
Equity			
General Fund	\$ (2,585.25)	\$ (26,964.29)	\$ 24,379.04
Investments (Endowment)	655,714.33	641,307.76	14,406.57
Fixed Assets (Building)	3,041,549.00	3,041,549.00	0.00
Total Equity	\$ 3,694,678.08	\$ 3,655,892.47	\$ 38,785.61
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$ 3,890,660.22	\$ 3,804,801.37	\$ 85,858.85

Balance Sheet Summary Notes:

Dedicated Funds include contributions designated for specific Council-approved categories (i.e. Memorials/Honorariums, Habitat for Humanity, Sheep and Goats contributions, Youth Trips/Projects, Music Ministry, Youth Ministry, and others). These funds are tracked separately and the contributions and/or expenses are not reflected in the Operating Income and Expenses Summary. A complete listing of the current Dedicated Funds can be found on the full balance sheet.

COUNCIL CORNER



This month we celebrate our Savior's birth. In many articles I had to mention the effects of the pandemic. Enough of that! It is Christmas!

I hope everyone had a blessed Thanksgiving. Likewise I hope all of us will be blessed this Christmas season. He has come!

Pastor Dan and the Worship Committee have come up with nice plans for services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Please read further for more information. We hope you celebrate Jesus' birth in one of those ways.

Thank you for attending the Annual Congregational Meeting on November 8th. It certainly was a different way of having one. Let us hope the next year will be different. In the meantime stop and count all of the blessings our Lord has given you.

Merry Christmas!

Randy Genther, Council President

Please feel free to speak with any of your Council members: Donna Tindera, Phil Sultan, Peter Brumenschenkle, Rob Winwood, Lynne Morella, Recording Secretary Jen Hinton, Vice President Aaron Ozanich, and Pastor Dan Skillman.



PROPERTY COMMITTEE

As stated last month, the Property Committee as well as the Worship Committee and Church Council continue to closely monitor the releases of information from the experts who are learning more about the Covid19 virus and evaluating what the new information tells us about how we can live in the safest possible way with it. Social distance, hand washing, and masks are still the major keys to protecting you and those you love from being infected. Handwashing is important because we are creatures of habit and will rub our eyes without thinking about the tiny virus that may be on our fingers. Recent studies show that virus laden mist travels farther than originally thought from simple speech, singing or yelling as at sporting events. Air movement by fans or air conditioning systems increases the effective travel range of the tiny infected droplets. With our Sanctuary system, air discharge from floor vents will tend to push the droplets back into the air. For this reason we will continue to shut down the air conditioning or heating of the Sanctuary while it is in use.

As mentioned during the congregational meeting, what we may be able to do this coming year depends upon the availability of the materials and parts required for a job more than anything. The virus has many materials and manufacturing companies operating at only partial output because of so many ill workers now. We will be watching the parking lot carefully for damage from the winter. If major repairs are required in the spring, the funds may need to be reallocated to the parking lot so any decision on what work is done next year will be done after we know the status and condition of the parking lot.

The usual monthly reminder : When the major repairs and replacement of parts of St. Paul was built into the budget 8 years ago, the congregation was advised that a 7% increase in giving would be able to support that plan. The congregation has been faithful to their unanimous approval and allowed St. Paul to make several improvements that have reduced the upkeep and operating expenses for the congregation. In the November congregational meeting, the financial report showed that the level of giving has decreased about 5% in the last year, making it difficult, if not impossible, to continue with the annual repairs in the future years. Please prayerfully consider what you may be able to do to help offset this decrease so that we can continue to make the necessary repairs and replacements before they become a more costly emergency situation.

-Jim Jungeberg



CHANGE IN CHRISTMAS SERVICES!

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES WILL BE INSIDE BY RESERVATION.

PLACE YOUR RESERVATION NOW!

To ensure a safe environment, we are limiting the number of worshippers allowed at each service.

Christmas Eve services will be held at 5, 7, and 9pm this year. These three services will all be liturgically the same, conducted inside, but contain different music. Communion will not be offered. Dress warmly, as the heat will be turned on and off between services to limit air circulation.

In addition, a pre-recorded Christmas Eve service of carolling and message will be available on YouTube for anyone wishing to sing along with their favorite songs.

Christmas Day service will be at 11am and will be inside. Communion will be offered.

For those not wishing to come inside to worship, the services will be broadcast on 88.5 FM and on Listen Everywhere WiFi in the parking lot. Additionally, the 9pm Christmas Eve service and the Christmas Day service will be broadcast live on YouTube.

To reserve your spot please call the church office at 440-243-1144 or send an email to officestaff@stpaulbera.org. Include in your reservation your groups first and last name, the total number of people in your group, and the service you wish to attend.



POINSETTIAS

The Altar Guild has purchased 30 poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for this Christmas. These plants will be available to anyone who wants one after the Christmas Day service. Any not taken will be given to shut ins and the needy. Donations to cover the cost can be made to the Altar Guild through a special offering.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



SUNDAY SCHOOL IS COMING TO YOU!

It has been such fun delivering our Sunday School Bags to all of you. We have had fun waving to our kids and families through curtains and doorways and we loved seeing all of your fantastic decorations and pumpkins that you have decorated. You warm our hearts as we think of all of you as we come to your homes, even though we might not see you.

Now, our December Bags are heading your way! Watch your front doors as we head your way during the beginning of December. If you hear a little beep, as we go out of your driveways, you will know that it is us.

We are delivering 40 bags each month, but we would still love to see if there are any kids, from preschool - sixth graders, that would want a Sunday School Bag delivered to their house. Grandchildren, cousins, neighbors, friends, please sign-up and we will deliver!

To sign-up, please send the following information to my email at church.

children@stpaulbera.org

Child's Name

Age & grade in school

Home Address

Phone Number Where You Can Be Reached

Month of Birth

I think of all of you each day and as we deliver our Kid's Bags at the beginning of each month. Sending a huge hug to all of you!

xoxo Susan M.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CALENDAR

NO ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED



**CONFIRMATION CLASSES CONTINUE
MONDAYS AT 7PM**

DID YOU KNOW?

This article is meant to learn more about some of our Saint Paul staff members:

This month we will learn more about Culley Coughlin, one of our Handbell Choir Directors.

Hi, I am Culley Coughlin. I was born in Lynchburg, Virginia but moved to Ohio in 1943 at the age of 3. I am from a musical family. My grandmother played the piano and sang and my grandfather played the cello and sang. They performed in church and many musical groups in Pittsburgh, where they lived. My mother was a violinist and my dad sang hymns and songs that he loved although he had no musical training. When we moved to Salem, Ohio in 1943 our train had to go through Washington, D.C. The train was crowded with soldiers and I am told that I entertained them by singing, "Hey babe, put that pistol down!

Pistol packin' mammy, Lay that pistol down!" I don't remember this but it started my musical career. I took piano lessons and sang in any choir that I could, through school and eventually studied at the B-W Conservatory of Music in Berea.

I taught elementary vocal music in the Strongsville City Schools and met my husband Neal, there at Allen Elementary School. I taught for 5 ½ years before I left teaching to have our three children.

I have always sung in choir wherever I have been or have been a choir director of children's or adult choirs. I couldn't have been more surprised to find myself directing St. Paul's Faithful Ringers beginning in 2009. Bells are so different from the choral or orchestral concept of singing or playing parts. The sound of bells and bell music has been such a blessing to me in so many ways. I appreciate what each bell ringer must do to ring their individual part. It will be wonderful to unpack those bell boxes and get to ringing again after this pandemic is over. This quote expresses what music does for me: "Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." Music is also the prayer we hum as we go about our daily life.

CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY RE-ENTRY PARTY

They are requesting gift cards and candy bags

BEREA COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We have signed up for 10 children again

Please contact the office to be matched up with a child and an item from their wish list. The items are NOT to be wrapped so their parents may have the fun of wrapping the gifts for their children.

All items for both groups need to be returned

To the church by Sunday, December 6th.



STOCKING STUFFER?!

What does every Caffeinated Chocoholic want for Christmas? Must you ask?

During this pandemic a stash of Equal Exchange bags of Coffee and Chocolate bars have been sitting quietly waiting for someone to enjoy them.

These will make excellent gifts or stocking stuffers, hint! hint!

We have limited quantities of coffee:

- Organic French Roast (whole bean) @ \$7.00
- Organic Mind Body & Soul (whole bean) @ \$7.00
- Organic Mind Body & Soul (ground) @ \$7.00
- Organic Breakfast Blend (whole bean) @ \$7.00
- Organic Decaf (whole bean) @ \$8.00
- Bright Day Brew (ground) @ \$6.50

We have limited quantities of chocolate bars @ \$2.75 each:

- Milk Chocolate
- Dark Chocolate Almond
- Dark Chocolate Orange
- Very Dark
- Dark Chocolate Caramel

All proceeds will go to the Sunday School program.

Please contact the office at 440-243-1144 and we will arrange a way to make an exchange of your money for our goodies.



ONCE UPON A TIME...



DECEMBER:

1866 St Pauls purchased 1 acre of land at corner of Eastland and First Ave, a portion was set aside for our cemetery

1869 On Christmas Eve, Ernst Klein donated portraits of Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon. Later these were found, restored and rededicated on Dec 22, 2002.

1906 St Paul Lutheran Church, Cleveland, (our daughter congregation) was established on Dec 6 (on the near west side, later combined (when congregations diminished) with Martin Luther as St Paul/Martin Luther.

1978 Council approved installation of basketball hoop in the Fellowship Hall (repeat from 1969)

1978 Pastor Tim Kuenzli began as associate pastor

1988 Arthur Last donated, through his will, \$75,000 to St. Pauls. This was one of the first donations to the Endowment fund.

1997 Carol Roose retired as administrative assistant

2000 Gifting Catalogue for donations to charitable organizations began

2000 Dick Densmore began serving as assistant organist.

2002 Jesus painting by Betty Havil rededicated.

2019 Christmas Day service reinstated

SHEEP AND GOATS FOCUS



CHURCH STREET MINISTRIES

Church Street Ministries is a non-profit organization providing food assistance, clothing, household goods and furniture for people in crisis and veterans in transition throughout the greater Cleveland community.

Church Street Ministries was founded by Christians on Church Street in Downtown Berea. Their mission is to provide basic human needs to align with the following biblical quote:

"... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25: 35-36 (RSV)

Church Street Ministries operates:

- **Second Mile Food Pantry** which served 14,492 people as of the end of September 2020, compared to 13,339 in all of 2019. This is a big increase considering November and December are usually their busiest months.
- **Second Mile Thrift Shop** which provides donated clothes and household items for sale, enabling those with limited income to buy these items at lower prices. In addition you are welcome to shop there. Where else can you shop and help others at the same time?!

Both are located at 1480 West Bagley Road, Berea, OH 44017 and can be contacted through their website churchstreetministries.org or by calling (440) 239-0549.

MONTHLY COLLECTION FOR BERA COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**IF YOU ARE ABLE TO DONATE ITEMS FOR
THE FOOD BANK, PLEASE TAKE THEM
DIRECTLY TO THE FOODBANK AT
535 WYLESWOOD DRIVE, BERA.
PLEASE CALL NATALIE AT
440-826-5800 X 4401 FOR HOURS**



COMMISSION ON AGING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS



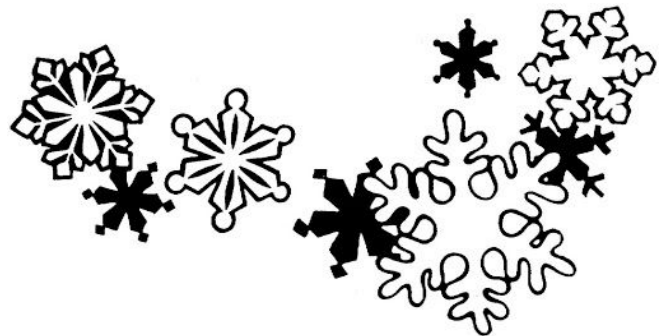
**All activities for the Active Senior
Network have been suspended
indefinitely.**

**As soon as we have information about
the resumption of services, we will
publish it.**

MEMORIALS

Jean Meresko
Bob & Marianne Trausch

OFFICIAL ACTS



ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
276 EAST BAGLEY ROAD
BEREA, OHIO 44017
440-243-1144
www.stpaulberea.org

FIRST CLASS
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



THE COLORS OF CHRISTMAS

GREEN

Evergreen plants, like Holly, Ivy and Mistletoe have been used for thousands of years to decorate and brighten up buildings during the long dark winter. They also reminded people that spring would come and that winter wouldn't last forever!

In many parts of Europe during the middle ages, Paradise plays were performed, often on Christmas Eve. They told Bible stories to people who couldn't read. The "Paradise Tree" in the garden of eden in the play was normally a pine tree with red apples tied to it.

Now the most common use of green at Christmas are Christmas Trees.

RED

As mentioned above, an early use of red at Christmas were the apples on the paradise tree. They represented the fall of Adam in the plays.

Red is also the color of Holly berries, which is said to represent the blood of Jesus when he died on the cross.

Red is also the color of Bishops robes. These would have been worn by St. Nicholas and then also became Santa's uniform!